

Legislative Regulation Review Committee

2010-041

Department of Social Services

SAFETY NET PROGRAM

IMPORTANT: Read instructions on bottom of Certification Page before completing this form. Failure to comply with instructions may cause disapproval of proposed Regulations.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
REGULATION
OF

NAME OF AGENCY

Department of Social Services

Concerning

SUBJECT MATTER OF REGULATION

Safety Net Services

SECTION _____

Statement of Purpose: The purpose of this regulation is to amend Uniform Policy Manual (UPM) sections 8545 and 8545.05. Previously, only families who received Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) and were not eligible for an extension of TFA benefits due to a non-compliance with an employment service requirement were eligible for Safety Net Program benefits. The proposed amendment would expand Safety Net Program benefits to include not only families who are ineligible for an extension due to non-compliance with employment services but also families who are ineligible for an extension due the exhaustion of time-limited benefits and families identified as having significant employment barriers. These amendments are being made pursuant to Public Act 07-160. The Department began implementing these changes on October 1, 2009 pursuant to section 17b-10 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

CERTIFICATION
R-39 REV. 1/77

Be it known that the foregoing:
[] Regulations [] Emergency Regulations
Page 2 of 2 pages

Are:
[] Adopted [] Amended as hereinabove stated [] Repealed

By the aforesaid agency pursuant to:
[] Sections of the General Statutes.
[] Section 17b-112e of the General Statutes, as amended by Public Act No. 07-016 of the Public Acts.
[] Public Act No. of the Public Acts.

After publication in the Connecticut Law Journal on 9/22/09, of the notice of the proposal to:
[] Adopt [] Amend [] Repeal such regulations
(If applicable): [] And the holding of an advertised public hearing on day of

WHEREFORE, the foregoing regulations are hereby:
[] Adopted [] Amended as hereinabove stated [] Repealed

Effective:
[] When filed with the Secretary of the State.
(OR)
[] The day of

In Witness Whereof: Date 6/30/10 SIGNED (Head of Board, Agency or Commission) OFFICIAL TITLE, DULY AUTHORIZED
Commissioner

Approved by the Attorney General as to legal sufficiency in accordance with sec. 4-169, as amended C.G.S. SIGNED 7/12/10 OFFICIAL TITLE, DULY AUTHORIZED
ASSOC. ATTY. GENERAL

[] Approved
[] Disapproved
[] Disapproved in part, (Indicate Section Numbers disapproved only)
[] Rejected without prejudice

By the Legislative Regulation Review Committee in accordance with Sec. 4-170, as amended, of the General Statutes. Date SIGNED (Clerk of the Legislative Regulation Review Committee)

Two certified copies received and filed, and one such copy forwarded to the Commission in Official Legal Publications in accordance with Section 4-172, as amended, of the General Statutes.

DATE SIGNED (Secretary of the State.) BY

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
UNIFORM POLICY MANUAL

Date: 7-1-97		Transmittal: UP-97-19		8545
Section:		Type:		
Jobs First				POLICY
Chapter:		Program:		
Safety Net Services				SN
Subject:				

8545 This chapter describes the requirements to access [Safety Net Services] safety net services for certain families identified as having significant barriers to employment who are receiving TFA but are at risk of losing assistance or, who have exhausted their twenty-one (21) months of time limited assistance and are not eligible for extensions due to receiving two sanctions or not making a good faith effort to seek and maintain employment. It includes a description of general principles, eligibility requirements, and the types of [Safety Net Services] safety net services [, and benefit delivery] that may be available to eligible families.

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
UNIFORM POLICY MANUAL

Date: 10-1-01	Transmittal: UP-04-7	8545.05
Section: Jobs First	Type:	POLICY
Chapter: Safety Net Services	Program:	SN
Subject: Provision of Safety Net Services		

- 8545.05 A. General Principles
- [Safety Net Services are offered at the discretion of the Department based on availability and suitability of the service to the assistance unit. The Department does not guarantee any Safety Net Services to any assistance units. Safety Net Services is not an entitlement program.]
1. Safety net services are provided by the Department to assist certain families identified as having significant barriers to employment who are at risk of losing benefits under TFA or who are no longer eligible to receive TFA.
 2. Safety net services are provided only to the extent that funding is available for such services. Safety net services are not provided through an entitlement program. To the extent the family is eligible for safety net services and the available funds only allow a limited number of eligible families to receive safety net services, the Department exercises its discretion and provides such assistance to those families with the greatest need.
- B. Eligibility Requirements
1. Except as described in B.2. and B.3. below, Safety Net Services may be provided on behalf of assistance units who have exhausted their twenty-one (21) months of time limited assistance, are not eligible for an extension because the assistance unit has not demonstrated good faith effort as defined at 8540.10, D. and have income below the payment standard for the appropriate assistance unit size as defined in 8562.15.
 2. Safety Net Services are not available to assistance units who fail to meet the TFA residency requirements, as defined in 8540.45.
 3. Safety Net Services are not available to assistance units unless the assistance unit meets the TFA eligible child requirements, as defined in 8540.15.]
1. In order for a family to be eligible for safety net services, the family must:
 - a. have applied for TFA, been referred for orientation and have significant barriers to employment as identified by the Department during its initial assessment;

- b. be receiving TFA and have significant barriers to employment as identified during the first 12 months of employment services by an employment services case manager;
- c. be receiving TFA and have made a good faith effort to seek and maintain employment but have not been able to do so or is at risk of failing to complete the employment services program;
- d. have been on TFA and exhausted eligibility for TFA, including all possible extensions; or
- e. have been on TFA and not eligible for six-month extensions due to:
 - (i) the receipt of two sanctions from the Department during the first 20 months of the 21-month time limit for TFA; or
 - (ii) the Department's determination that the family has not made a good-faith effort to seek and maintain employment. Families who are at risk for losing TFA benefits under clause B.1.c. of this subparagraph may establish good faith by complying with the requirements under section 8540.10 subsections D. and E.

2. A family that is no longer eligible for TFA, in accordance with clauses B.1.d. or B.1.e., must:

- a. meet residency requirements as set forth in section 8540.45;
- b. meet the eligible child requirements, as set forth in section 8540.15; and
- c. have income below the income payment standard for the appropriate assistance unit, as set forth in section 8562.15.

C. Scope of Safety Net Services

- [1. Assistance units referred for Safety Net Services receive an assessment which will examine factors such as current employment status, assistance unit income, employment history and family risk factors. A target budget is established which reflects the income that the family needs to become self-sufficient.
- 2. Assessment results are used in the determination of what services will be offered and the duration, frequency, and intensity of case management.
- 3. The assessment results are used to develop a service plan as described in C.4. below.
- 4. Safety Net Services include intensive case management services and the development of a case plan designed to minimize the likelihood of harm to children and to remove the Safety Net Services as soon as possible. Plan components may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. employment related activities to be performed by members of the assistance unit;
 - b. identifying and removing barriers to employment;
 - c. supportive services to assist individuals in meeting employment and job search responsibilities;
 - d. linkages to existing employment services network;
 - e. assistance or referrals to solve problems such as language barriers, substance abuse, budgeting, etc.;

- f. linkage to local organizations for the provision of basic needs;
 - g. services to promote stability in the family's housing situation such as eviction prevention, mediation, counseling, etc.;
 - h. referrals to shelters for the homeless when appropriate;
 - i. strategies to protect children where there is a concern for their well-being. This includes the reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect to DCF and reporting to the Department of Health and Addiction Services concerns about children in child care settings.
5. Safety Net Services may be provided through appropriate referrals to the existing community service delivery network.
 6. Safety Net Services include coordination of services designed to meet service plans by providing and monitoring referrals for needed services identified in the plan.
 7. If a service is not available through the existing community service network, the Department, at its discretion, may provide for the service through a vendor.
 8. The Department determines which Safety Net Services will be provided to an individual assistance unit and the duration of such services. The determination of the Department whether or not to provide a service is discretionary and not subject to further review through the Fair Hearing process.]

1. Assessment

The Department shall conduct an in-depth family needs assessment for families who have been determined to be eligible for the program. The assessment examines such factors as current employment status, family income, employment history and family risk factors. As part of the assessment, the Department determines the family income necessary to allow the family to become self-sufficient.

2. Service Plan and Plan Components

- (a) The service plan describes the safety net services that the Department has determined are necessary for a family. The Department determines which safety net services shall be provided to the family and the duration, frequency and intensity of such services using the results of the in-depth family needs assessment.
- (b) Every service plan shall include intense case management services, which includes visits to the family's home.
- (c) The service plan is designed to provide these services that are necessary to meet the family's needs as efficiently as possible and to minimize the likelihood of harm to children in the family.

(d) Safety net services in a service plan may include, but are not limited to, the following services or components:

- (i) eviction prevention or other services that promote stability in the family's housing situation, such as mediation, counseling and referrals to homeless shelters, if appropriate;
- (ii) continual monitoring for child abuse or neglect;
- (iii) supportive services to assist individuals meet employment and job search responsibilities;
- (iv) linkages to employment services networks;
- (v) assistance or referrals to solve problems, including, but not limited to, language barriers, substance abuse and budgeting;
- (vi) identifying and removing barriers to employment;
- (vii) employment-related activities to be performed by members of the family;
- (viii) for a family no longer eligible for TFA and for whom assistance through community resources is unavailable, food, shelter and clothing;
- (ix) for a family on TFA and at risk of losing benefits under TFA, additional screening, assessment or case management services needed to identify and address barriers to work or to compliance with employment services requirements or to document eligibility for an exemption from program requirements (Cross-reference 8530.15); or
- (x) for families on TFA and at risk for of losing benefits, development of independent performance contracts to establish that good faith efforts were being made to seek and maintain employment. (Cross-reference 8540.10)

3. Delivery of Safety Net Services

- (a) Safety net services are provided through the existing community service delivery network, with additional resources provided by the Department, as necessary and available, if the services are not available through the existing community service delivery network.
- (a) Safety net services are provided in-kind or through vendor or voucher payments.
- (b) Safety net services may be provided either directly by the Department or by a contractor.

[D. Benefit Delivery

Safety Net Services are provided directly by the Department or through a contractor of the Department in the form of direct services, in-kind services, vendor payments, or voucher payments.]

D. Administrative Review

A person aggrieved by the Department's decisions concerning whether and to what extent discretionary safety net services or benefits are provided shall be given an opportunity to request an informal review.

- a. A written request for an informal review shall be made to the Department's agent where the program is locally administered or, if there is no such agent, to the Department. The request shall be made or postmarked no later than ten days from the date of notice of the decision from the Department or its agent.
- b. The informal review shall be conducted by any person or persons designated by the Department or its agent, other than a person who recommended or approved the decision under review or subordinate of such person.
- c. Not later than thirty days from the date of the informal review the Department or its agent shall issue a written report of its findings, which may order a change to the original decision of which review, was sought. The Department or its agent shall use information presented with the request to make factual determinations of the circumstances of the applicant or recipient who requested the review. A copy of the result shall be provided promptly to the applicant or recipient who requested the informal review and shall include any documents presented with the request for an informal review.
- d. If, following an informal review and report of findings, the original decision is unchanged, the Department shall provide a desk review of the findings, upon written request of the applicant or recipient, to ensure compliance with an agent's contractual obligation. The applicant or recipient shall request such desk review no later than ten days after the decision has been rendered. The Department shall use no new information, which could have been presented at the informal review, for the purposes of such desk review. Requests should be sent to:

Commissioner, Department of Social Services
Family Services Unit
25 Sigourney Street
Hartford, CT 06106

- e. The foregoing procedures are exclusive and administrative fair hearings are not available to review the Department's discretionary determinations whether to offer safety net services.